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AUTHOR	Zimmerman, Judith A.
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ABSTRACT

Two education initiatives in Ohio, the Pairwise Mentoring System and the Baldrige Approach for School Improvement, show promise for raising the achievement of K-12 students. As busy educational leaders who are expected to lead change efforts in their schools, preservice and inservice administrators can benefit by seeing the connections between new initiatives rather than by viewing them as add-ons. Pathwise and Baldrige are both frameworks that are based on research and proven practice. This paper summarizes their basic components and similarities, and presents an effort, in chart form, to align the 7 Baldrige categories with the 19 criteria in the 4 Pathwise domains. The paper also explores ways to integrate the study of Pathwise and Baldrige within the educational administration program. (SLD)

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Running Head: BALANCING INITIATIVES: HELP FOR THE PRACTITIONER

Balancing Research-Based Initiatives: Help for the Practitioner

Judith A. Zimmerman, Ph.D.
Bowling Green State University
Room 511 Education Building
Bowling Green, OH 43403
419-372-9476
judithz@bgnet.bgsu.edu

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Abstract

Two education initiatives in Ohio, the Pathwise Mentoring System and the Baldrige Approach for School Improvement, show promise of raising the achievement of K – 12 students. As busy educational leaders who are expected to lead change efforts in their schools, preservice and inservice administrators can benefit by seeing the connections between new initiatives rather than viewing them as add-ons. Pathwise and Baldrige are both frameworks that are based on research and proven practice. This paper/presentation summarizes their basic components and similarities, and the author's work to align the seven Baldrige Categories with the 19 criteria in the four Pathwise Domains. The paper/presentation also explores ways to integrate the study of Pathwise and Baldrige within the educational administration preparation program.

Balancing Research-Based Initiatives: Help for the Practitioner

Two education initiatives in Ohio, the Pathwise Mentoring System and the Baldrige Approach for School Improvement, show promise of raising the achievement of our students. As busy educational leaders who are expected to lead change efforts in their schools, preservice and inservice administrators can benefit by seeing the connections between new initiatives rather than viewing them as "add-ons". This paper/presentation summarizes the basic components and similarities of the two initiatives, and the author's work to align the seven Baldrige Categories with the 19 criteria in the four Pathwise Domains. The paper/presentation also explores ways to address the study of Pathwise and Baldrige within the educational administration preparation program.

Ohio Department of Education Teacher Licensure Requirements

Beginning in the fall of 2002, all entry year teachers (EYTs) in Ohio must successfully complete an entry year program and pass the PRAXIS III (performance) assessment before they are issued a five-year professional license (Division of Professional Development and Licensure, 1999). Mentor teachers must receive training, through the use of a system such as Pathwise, in how to support and provide feedback to EYTs in order to prepare them for this performance assessment (Division of Professional Development and Licensure).

Pathwise Mentoring System

Pathwise is built on a framework of 19 essential teaching skills, clustered into four domains, as defined by professional educators (Pathwise Orientation Guide, 1995). The criteria represent the knowledge, skills and abilities possessed by the accomplished teacher. Beginning teachers, in consultation with their mentors, use the developmental cycle of plan, teach, reflect, and apply to identify their teaching strengths and areas for growth.

The Pathwise Domains

Domain A – Organizing Content Knowledge for Student Learning

1. Becoming familiar with relevant aspects of students' background knowledge and experiences
2. Articulating clear learning goals for the lesson that are appropriate to the students
3. Demonstrating an understanding of the connections between the content that was learned previously, the current content, and the content that remains to be learned in the future
4. Creating or selecting teaching methods, learning activities, and instructional materials or other resources that are appropriate to the students and that are aligned with the goals of the lesson
5. Creating or selecting evaluation strategies that are appropriate for the students and that are aligned with the goals of the lesson

Domain B – Creating an Environment for Student Learning

1. Creating a climate that promotes fairness
2. Establishing and maintaining rapport with students
3. Communicating challenging learning expectations to each student
4. Establishing and maintaining consistent standards of classroom behavior
5. Making the physical environment as safe and conducive to learning as possible

Domain C – Teaching for Student Learning

1. Making learning goals and instructional procedures clear to students
2. Making content comprehensible to students
3. Encouraging students to extend their thinking

4. Monitoring students' understanding of content through a variety of means, providing feedback to students to assist learning, and adjusting learning activities as the situation demands
5. Using instructional time effectively

Domain D – Teacher Professionalism

1. Reflecting on the extent to which the learning goals were met
2. Demonstrating a sense of efficacy
3. Building professional relationships with colleagues to share teaching insights and to coordinate learning activities for students
4. Communicating with parents or guardians about student learning (Pathwise Orientation Guide, 1995)

Ohio Baldrige in Education Initiative (BiE IN)

Ohio is one of six Baldrige in Education States (Ohio Department of Education, 2001). The Ohio BiE IN State Leadership Team is using the Baldrige Approach for School Improvement to raise student achievement, assess progress, and hold the education system accountable for results. Baldrige, like Pathwise, is also based on sound theory and proven practice (Ohio Department of Education).

What is Baldrige?

Baldrige has become a generic term used to describe a systemic framework of quality concepts designed to improve the overall effectiveness of any organization by raising expectations, building capacity, and improving results for all the stakeholders (Ohio Department of Education, 2001).

"Although the Baldrige Education Criteria Framework is intended to address all organizational requirements…emphasis is placed on teaching and learning….sharing of successful teaching and learning strategies and methods would have the greatest impact on the nation's education improvement" (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2000, p.9).

The Baldrige Categories

The seven Baldrige Categories describe the essential elements of an in integrated management system.

1. Leadership requires leaders to set and communicate direction consistent with stakeholder requirements.
2. Strategic Planning translates stakeholder needs into goals, measures and action plans.
3. Student and Stakeholder Focus defines the aim of the district, school or classroom.
4. Information and Analysis provides the foundation of aligned decision-making in all areas of the system.
5. Human Resource Focus examines how the district, school or classroom enables workers to develop and utilize their full potential.
6. Educational and Support Process Management addresses how educational products and services are designed, implemented and improved.
7. Performance Results examines the district, school or classroom performance in key areas. (Shipley, 2000, pp. 9 - 15).

How Does Baldrige Relate to What Goes On in the Classroom?

"Any effort to improve student learning must, of course, impact the classroom. The principles underlying the Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence are applicable at all levels of the educational system, including the classroom" (Mitchell, 1999, p. 69).

Using the Baldrige Categories and the Pathwise Domains provides a framework for teachers to translate into classroom action the plan, do, study, act (PDSA) cycle of continuous improvement and the developmental cycle of plan, teach, reflect, and apply. For example, a teacher and his/her students can identify a classroom process to be improved ("Baldrige Category 6 – Educational and Support Process Management" and "Pathwise Criterion D1 – Reflection on the Extent to Which the Learning Goals Were Met"). The teacher and class can develop a flow chart to describe the current process and then determine an improvement strategy to use. Next, they will monitor the process and analyze the data gathered from the monitoring process. After the process improvement data have been collected, analyzed, and acted upon, the planning for process management and improvement begins again (Shipley & Caldwell, 2000, pp.41 - 47).

The following chart represents the author's attempt to align the seven Baldrige categories with the 19 criteria in the four Pathwise Domains. The chart developed by Mitchell (1999, pp. 70 – 76) for teachers' self-assessment of their use of the Baldrige categories in their classrooms was use as a foundation.

Comparison of Baldrige Categories to Pathwise Domain Criteria

Baldrige Category	Baldrige Category Descriptions	Pathwise Domain Criteria
Leadership	Works with students to write classroom mission statement	B3
Leadership	Uses quality principles, such as PDSA, in daily classroom operations	D1
Leadership	Progress toward goals aligned with School Improvement Plan is regularly reviewed, displayed and communicated to students and parents	C4 & D4
Leadership	Joins with parents and other groups to continually improve classroom, school and community efforts	D3 & D4
Leadership	Ensures ethical practices in all student interactions	B1 & B4
Leadership	Establishes a learning environment that promotes equity and safety for all students	B1 & B5
Strategy Development Process	Involves students in planning designed to identify and meet the educational needs of the classroom and the School Improvement Plan	A1 &A2
Strategy Development Process	Provides for the development of classroom goals and measures that are aligned to the next grade level expectations and the School Improvement Plan	A3
Strategy Development Process	Allocates time and resources consistent with the goals and measures of the classroom plan	A4 & C5
Strategy Development Process	Develops a plan that includes stretch goals which focus on student achievement	C3
Customer Focus	Incorporates customer requirements in the development of improvement objectives for the classroom	A2, D3
Customer Focus	Uses next grade/level/course expectations as a basis for classroom goals	A3 & D3
Customer Focus	Has provided for building and maintaining positive customer relationships	D3 & D4
Customer Focus	Regularly assesses the levels of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction as a means of identifying improvement opportunities	D3 & D4
Information and Analysis	Stays informed on district & school issues, trends, and operations and uses these to support & monitor classroom goals	D2
Information and Analysis	Has appropriate information systems to routinely monitor classroom results and support plans for academic and operational improvement	A5 & C4
Information and Analysis	Uses comparison data to assess the rate of classroom improvement	C4
Information and Analysis	Provides the students with timely information and materials to increase student/classroom performance	C1

Comparison of Baldrige Categories to Pathwise Domain Criteria

Baldrige Category	Baldrige Category Descriptions	Pathwise Domain Criteria
Human Resources Development and Management	Encourages the use of cooperative approaches and student teams in developing student-led processes	C1 & C2
Human Resources Development and Management	Has systems in place to recognize student contributions toward achieving school & classroom goals	C4
Human Resources Development and Management	Has systems in place to train & educate students in key classroom processes	B4 & C1
Human Resources Development and Management	Assesses, monitors, and improves the level of student involvement, well-being, and satisfaction with classroom & learning processes	A1 & B2
Process Management	Uses a standardized process to design, deliver and improve teaching and learning processes (PDSA)	D1
Process Management	Creates a physical classroom environment that supports the achievement of learning goals	B5
Process Management	Systematically monitors and continually improves classroom support processes	A5 & C4
Process Management	Communicates to suppliers (i.e., previous level/course instructors, schools, parents) what is needed from them for student success	D3 & D4
Performance Results	Gathers student baseline data	A1
Performance Results	Asks, "How do our results compare to similar classrooms?"	A5 & C4
Performance Results	Classroom academic performance results are improving	A5 & C4
Performance Results	Classroom management results (i.e., attendance, transition times, referrals) are improving	B1, B4 & C5
Performance Results	Student involvement and satisfaction results are improving	B2 & C1
Performance Results	Customer satisfaction results are improving	D3 & D4

Educational Administration Preparation Programs

Professors in educational administration programs have a responsibility to provide preservice and inservice administrators with the knowledge and skills that will help them to meet expectations in their positions as educational leaders. Integrating the study of recent educational mandates and initiatives within the administrative courses of study could help to fulfill that responsibility. In Ohio, teacher preparation programs already address the PRAXIS and Pathwise Criteria. Because it is important for administrators to support their entry year teachers, preparation programs for administrators should also address these crucial teacher licensure principalships issues. In supervision courses, it would seem appropriate, particularly in Ohio, to incorporate Pathwise information into lessons dealing with entry year teachers. Likewise, a focus on Baldrige would be natural when discussing change frameworks or strategic planning in courses that concentrate on the principalship or educational administration in general.

Conclusion

Busy educational leaders can benefit by seeing how the implementation of different educational initiatives can complement each another. The Pathwise Mentoring System and the Baldrige Approach for School Improvement are both frameworks that are based on research and proven practice. Both use developmental and continuous improvement cycles grounded in reflective practice to help improve instruction and student achievement. Addressing the study of initiatives, such as Pathwise and Baldrige, within preparation programs is needed to adequately prepare aspirants for the realities that they will face as educational leaders.

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Organization/Address: Bowling Green State Univ. Bowling Green, OH 43403	Telephone: 419-372-9476	FAX: 419-372-8448
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